



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER  
GOVERNOR

GLEN W. THOMAS  
SECRETARY

**State of California**  
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE  
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August 28, 2009

The Honorable Arne Duncan  
Secretary of Education  
Attention: Race to the Top Fund Comments  
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Room 3W329  
Washington, DC 20202

RE: Docket ID ED-2009-OESE-0006

Dear Mr. Secretary,

On behalf of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, I am writing to submit comments on the proposed priorities, regulations and selection criteria for the Race to the Top program in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

California believes strongly in the importance of ensuring that all students have access to a world-class education, and we couldn't agree more about the urgency to enact real education reform immediately. Governor Schwarzenegger is pleased to stand with you in calling for measures that support internationally benchmarked standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and the workplace; recruit, develop, reward and retain effective teachers and principals; build data systems that measure student success and inform teachers and principals how they can improve their practices; and turn around our lowest-performing schools.

On August 20, Governor Schwarzenegger called a special session of the California State Legislature to enact the necessary statutory changes to make California eligible and highly competitive for the Race to the Top. These are policies the Governor has supported for years, and he is thrilled to have partners in Washington who share his commitment to serving and supporting our students.

The proposed guidelines include the requirement that states must commit to adopting the common core standards being developed by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers. As you know, California has some of the highest academic standards in the nation. We believe it is important for all states to have rigorous standards, and we are pleased to participate in developing the common core. However, we cannot commit to adopting a new set of standards until we have determined that they meet or exceed our own. We know you appreciate how important it is for California to maintain high academic expectations for our students.

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We applaud you for your bold leadership in these important areas of reform, and we look forward to working with you to build a better future for our nation's students. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Glen W. Thomas', with a stylized, flowing script.

Glen W. Thomas

/jh